

CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for determining payment for provision of multiple different services based on predetermined reimbursement rules, comprising the steps of:

employing a record repository for linking a plurality of different encounters and associated service records of a patient involving receiving different treatment services at different healthcare provider facilities on different occasions separated by a time period of up to at least a week;

receiving a first record identifying a particular service provided to a specific entity patient;

in response to receiving said first record, automatically searching said record repository for a record indicating at least one other service provided to said specific entity patient;

automatically grouping an item identifying said ~~provided~~ particular service together with an item identifying ~~another~~ said at least one other service provided to said specific entity patient based on predetermined service record allocation rules;

automatically creating a reimbursement record identifying grouped items; and

calculating a reimbursement amount for said ~~identified-provided~~ particular service and said ~~other~~ at least one other service provided to said specific entity patient based on a reimbursement contract determining service grouping affects reimbursement amount.

2. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 1, including automatically recalculating said reimbursement amount in response to receiving a second record identifying a further service provided to said specific patient wherein

said step of automatically creating a reimbursement record comprises creating a reimbursement record without manual intervention from received records identifying different types of services provided to said specific entity patient on separate occasions.

3. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 2, wherein said different types of treatment services comprise an outpatient service and an inpatient service.

4. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein
said record repository links a plurality of different encounters of a plurality of different patients and
in response to receiving said first record automatically searching said record repository for a record indicating at least one other service provided to said specific patient and a different patient and
automatically grouping an item identifying said particular service together with an item identifying said at least one other service in response to identifying linked records of said specific patient and said different patient and
said predetermined service record allocation rules comprise at least one of, (a) rules determining whether said provided service as well as said other service qualify for reimbursement under at least one reimbursement contract, and (b) rules in a reimbursement contract.

5. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein
said reimbursement contract comprises a healthcare policy covering said specific entity patient and ~~said specific entity comprises a patient and~~
automatically analyzing data representing said reimbursement contract to identify rules to be used in grouping services for reimbursement and automatically applying identified rules in grouping said item identifying said particular service together with said item identifying said at least one other service.

6. (Original) A method according to claim 1 implemented as a program of instructions contained on a storage medium and executable by a machine.

7. (Currently Amended) A user interface supporting a method for determining payment for provision of multiple different services based on predetermined reimbursement rules, comprising the steps of:

employing a record repository for linking a plurality of different encounters and associated service records of a patient involving receiving different treatment services at different healthcare provider facilities on different occasions separated by a time period of up to at least a week;

receiving a first record identifying a particular service provided to a specific patient;

in response to receiving said first record, automatically searching said record repository for a record indicating at least one other service provided to said specific patient;

generating a first user selectable menu icon for initiating display of a reimbursement record, said reimbursement record showing

data indicating automatically grouped items including an item identifying ~~a service~~ said particular service provided to ~~a said specific entity patient~~ together with an item identifying ~~another~~ said at least one other service provided to said specific ~~entity~~ patient based on predetermined service record allocation rules; and

automatically calculating reimbursement amounts for said identified provided service and said other service provided to said specific ~~entity~~ patient based on a reimbursement contract.

8. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 7, including the steps of

automatically recalculating said reimbursement amount in response to receiving further records identifying corresponding further services provided to said specific patient, for individual records of said further records one record at a time, in response to automatically grouping items representing said further services with said particular service wherein

generating a second user selectable menu icon for initiating display of a bill including said reimbursement amount for said provided service and said other service.

9. (Currently Amended) A method for use in billing for provision of multiple different services based on predetermined reimbursement rules, comprising the steps of:

employing a record repository for linking a plurality of different encounters and associated service records of a patient involving receiving different treatment services at different healthcare provider facilities on different occasions separated by a time period of up to at least a week;

receiving a first record identifying a particular service provided to an entity;

automatically applying predetermined allocation rules for ~~identifying~~ providing a reimbursement record indicating a group of services to be billed together on a single bill, said group of services having been provided to said entity, ~~by, in response to receiving said first record, automatically searching said record repository for a record indicating at least one other service provided to said specific entity and linked to said particular service;~~

~~automatically creating a reimbursement record identifying grouped items;~~

updating said ~~identified~~ reimbursement record to incorporate a record item representing said ~~identified~~ provided at least one other service;

calculating a reimbursement amount for said ~~identified~~ provided particular service based on predetermined reimbursement rules; and

preparing a bill including said group of services ~~and comprising~~ said ~~identified~~ provided particular service and said at least one other service for communication to a payer.

10. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 9, including automatically calculating a reimbursement amount for said bill, in response to receiving further records identifying corresponding further services provided to said specific entity for individual records of said further records, one record at a time, in response to automatically grouping items representing said further services with said particular service wherein

said predetermined allocation rules comprise rules for determining said ~~identified~~ provided particular service as well as said group of services qualify for reimbursement under at least one of (a) a single reimbursement contract and (b) a common set of reimbursement contracts.

11. (Original) A method according to claim 9, wherein said predetermined allocation rules comprise rules in a reimbursement contract.

12. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 9, wherein said predetermined allocation rules identify a reimbursement record to incorporate a record item representing said ~~identified-provided~~ particular service based on the type of said ~~identified-provided~~ particular service.

13. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 12, wherein said type of said ~~identified-provided~~ particular service comprises at least one of, (a) an inpatient service, (b) an outpatient service and (c) an emergency service.

14. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 9, including the step of
identifying and prioritizing at least one of (a) reimbursement contracts and (b) policies, comprising predetermined reimbursement rules and
selecting said predetermined reimbursement rules from said prioritized and identified predetermined reimbursement rules for calculating reimbursement for said ~~identified-provided~~ particular service.

15. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 9, wherein said reimbursement record indicates said group of services are reimbursable according to rules in a single reimbursement contract and including the step of
automatically determining whether said ~~identified-particular~~ service is also reimbursable according to rules in said single reimbursement contract.

16. (Original) A method according to claim 9, wherein said specific entity comprises at least one of, (a) a patient, (b) a company, (c) an individual person and (d) a group of people and including the step of searching for other services also provided to said specific entity.

17. (Currently Amended) A method for determining payment for provision of multiple different services based on predetermined reimbursement rules, comprising the steps of:

employing a record repository for linking a plurality of different encounters and associated service records of a patient involving receiving different treatment services at different healthcare provider facilities on different occasions separated by a time period of up to at least a week;

receiving a first record identifying a particular service provided to a specific entity patient;

in response to receiving said first record, automatically searching said record repository for a record of an additional service provided to said specific entity patient;

automatically determining whether said identified particular service as well as said additional service provided to said specific entity patient qualify for reimbursement under a single reimbursement contract;

automatically creating a record indicating said identified particular service and additional service provided to said specific entity patient qualify for reimbursement under a single reimbursement contract; and

calculating a reimbursement amount for said identified particular service and additional service provided to said specific entity patient based on said single reimbursement contract and

automatically calculating a reimbursement amount, in response to receiving further records identifying corresponding further services provided to said specific patient for individual records of said further records, one record at a time, in response to automatically determining said further services are to be grouped with said particular service for reimbursement under said single reimbursement contract.

18. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 17, including the step of

preparing a bill including said reimbursement amount for said identified particular service and additional service for communication to a payer.

19. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 17, wherein said specific entity patient comprises at least one of, (a) a patient, (b) a company, (c) an individual person and (d) a group of people.

20. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 17, including the steps of

identifying and prioritizing at least one of, (a) reimbursement contracts and (b) policies associated with reimbursement contracts, applicable for reimbursing for said ~~identified~~ particular service and additional service and

selecting said single reimbursement contract from one of, (i) said prioritized reimbursement contracts and (ii) said reimbursement contracts associated with said prioritized policies.

21. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 17, including the step of

searching for other services also provided to said specific ~~entity~~ patient.

22. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 17, including the step of

sorting said ~~identified~~ particular service and additional service by date service is performed.

23. (Currently Amended) A method for determining payment for provision of multiple different services to a patient based on predetermined reimbursement rules, comprising the steps of:

employing a record repository for linking a plurality of different encounters and associated service records of a patient involving receiving different treatment services at different healthcare provider facilities on different occasions separated by a time period of up to at least a week;

receiving a first record identifying a particular service provided to a specific entity patient;

in response to receiving said first record, automatically searching said record repository for a reimbursement record indicating at least one other service provided to said specific entity patient;

automatically determining whether said ~~identified~~ particular service as well as said at least one other service provided to said specific entity patient qualify for grouped reimbursement under a single reimbursement contract;

updating said reimbursement record to incorporate a record item representing said ~~identified provided~~ particular service in response to determination of said qualification; and

calculating a reimbursement amount for said ~~identified~~ particular service and at least one other service provided to said specific entity patient based on said single reimbursement contract.

24. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 23, including the steps of

automatically analyzing data representing a plurality of reimbursement contracts associated with said specific patient to identify rules to be used in grouping services for reimbursement and automatically applying identified rules in grouping said particular service and said at least one other service for reimbursement and

preparing a bill including said reimbursement amount for said identified service and said at least one other service for communication to a payer.

25. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 23, wherein said reimbursement record indicates services provided to said entity patient within a specific period encompassing at least one of, (a) a plurality of weeks and (b) a plurality of months, and wherein said updating step comprises

updating said reimbursement record to incorporate said record item representing said ~~identified provided~~ particular service in response to determination said ~~identified provided~~ particular service was provided within said specific period.

26. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 23, including the step of

automatically grouping said particular service provided to said specific ~~entity~~ patient with said at least one other service provided to said specific ~~entity~~ patient based on two or more of, (a) date of service, (b) patient identifier, (c) type of service, (d) type of patient and (e) patient medical characteristics.

27. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 23, including the step of

determining said ~~identified-provided~~ particular service as well as said ~~group of services~~ at least one other qualify for reimbursement under at least one of (a) a single reimbursement contract and (b) a common set of reimbursement contracts.